

**PATENT**

Attorney Docket No. 55954

Express Mail Label No. EV 785819058 US

Reply under 37 CFR 1.116

Expedited Procedure

Technology Center 3677

**REMARKS**

Claims 22, 24-25, and 36-48 are pending herein. A Petition for Extension of Time (2 months) accompanies this paper.

Applicant appreciates the Patent Office's indication that Claims 25 and 40-48 are allowed over the prior art and that Claims 23, 24, 36, and 37 are objected to for depending upon a rejected base claim, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 22 and 24 are amended to include subpart matter indicated to be allowable, specifically claim 22 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 23 and claim 24 is rewritten in independent form. As such, all pending claims are allowable without further search or consideration by the Patent Office.

Claims 22, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,065,916 to Shambeau. By this Amendment, claim 22 is amended to include the subject matter of Claim 23. Claims 38 and 39 depend from claim 22. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 22, 38, and 39 were objected to as being indefinite. Claim 22 is amended to remove "at least substantially centrally along said D-shaped ring members."

This Amendment complies with 37 CFR §1.116 since the Amendment cancels rejected claims, complies with requirements as to form, places the application in condition for allowance, does not raise an issue of new matter, and does not require further consideration or search by the Patent Office.

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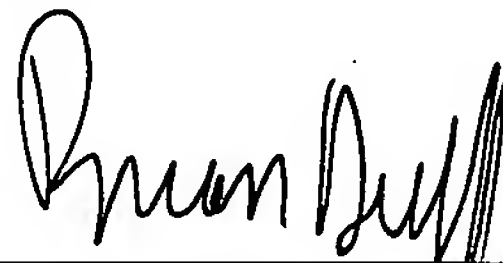
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Please charge all fees associated with this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-1662.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 29, 2006

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